

VZCZCXRO3055
OO RUEHCHI RUEHCN RUEHDT RUEHGH RUEHHM RUEHNH RUEHVC
DE RUEHGP #1822 2740945
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 010945Z OCT 07
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4135
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2629
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1969
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 4090
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5688
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 1353

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 001822

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/01/2017
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [BM](#) [SN](#)
SUBJECT: BURMA: SINGAPORE TOLERATES AN "ILLEGAL"
DEMONSTRATION

REF: SINGAPORE 1812

Classified By: CDA Daniel Shields. Reasons 1.4 (d)

[11](#). (C) Summary: A crowd of 150 Burmese nationals gathered outside the Embassy of Burma on September 30 to protest the regime's crackdown in Rangoon, according to local press reports. The Singapore police advised the protesters that it was an illegal public assembly and told them to disperse, but did not break it up. The GOS usually shows no tolerance for public demonstrations, but in this case it has handled it with a light touch. Singapore's government-controlled press has been remarkably tough on the regime and sympathetic toward the protesters in Burma since the crisis began (Reftel). In responding to protests here, the GOS is likely also keeping in mind the considerable public sympathy that Singapore press coverage has helped to generate. End Summary.

[12](#). (SBU) While Singapore maintains strict prohibitions on public demonstrations, a crowd of almost 150 Burmese nationals gathered outside the Embassy of Burma on September 30 to protest the regime's crackdown in Rangoon, according to local press reports. A few Burmese nationals came in the early afternoon and more streamed in over the course of the day as word spread in the community, opposition politician Chee Siok Chin told us on October 1. Police arrived in the early evening and advised the crowd to disperse as it constituted an illegal public assembly but did not break up the protest, the Straits Times reported. (Note: An outdoor gathering of five or more people requires a permit. End Note.) Some protesters stayed until 3am, according to Chee.

[13](#). (SBU) Chee Siok Chin and her brother Dr. Chee Soon Juan had set up outside the Embassy of Burma around 12pm on September 30 to gather signatures for petitions to be given to the Burmese ambassador and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. Chee Siok Chin told us they had gathered 600 signatures for the petitions so far and they were continuing their vigil outside the embassy to gather more. She said some of the Burmese nationals planned to come back again to protest in front of the embassy on the night of October 1.

[14](#). (SBU) The Singapore Police Force has deployed a half dozen plain clothes officers near the Burmese Embassy (which is on a secluded dead-end road, albeit near a major shopping street). Passers-by (including poloff on the afternoon of October 1) are advised that there is an illegal public assembly in front of the Burmese Embassy and if they join it they may be investigated.

[15](#). (C) Comment: The GOS usually shows no tolerance for public

demonstrations. In 2005, for instance, it deployed several dozen riot police to order Chee Siok Chin and three colleagues to stop a silent protest outside a government building. Given all the bad press Burma is getting for attacking demonstrators, the GOS has handled the protest outside Burma's embassy here with a light touch. The Singapore government-controlled press has given favorable coverage to the protests in Burma and been remarkably hard on the regime, calling on it to "manage its own demise." The GOS appears to be sympathetic to the demonstrators in Burma and cognizant of the considerable public sympathy that exists in Singapore for them. End Comment.

Visit Embassy Singapore's Classified website:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eap/singapore/ind ex.cfm>
SHIELDS